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Phone: 843-546-8502

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Region 9: Trident

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Serving: Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester Counties

Phone: 843-554-2280

1-800-864-6446 (outside Charleston County)

Region 10: Lowcountry

Yemassee, SC

Serving: Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton, and Jasper Counties

Phone: 843-726-5536

1-877-846-8148 (outside Jasper County)

Facilities that would like to offer the benefit of having Friendly Visitors serve their residents can enroll in the Friendly Visitor Program by contacting the Regional Office for their home county.

State Long Term Care Ombudsman Program:

For advocacy, information, or assistance, please contact:

Lt. Governor's Office on Aging
1301 Gervais St., Suite 350

Phone: 803-734-9900
1-800-868-9095
(LGOA 4/2011)



LONG TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM



1 - 800 - 868 - 9095
1 - 803 - 734 - 9900

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR'S
OFFICE ON AGING

What is a Long Term Care Ombudsman?

A Long Term Care Ombudsman serves as the advocate for residents in long term care facilities. They investigate complaints and negotiate on the residents' behalf to resolve complaints to the residents' satisfaction. This is the only program of its kind that is totally devoted to the concerns of facility residents.



Background and Authority

The Long Term Care Ombudsman Program is governed by the federal Older Americans Act. The South Carolina Lt. Governor's Office on Aging administers the statewide Long Term Care Ombudsman Program through ten regional offices located throughout the state. These programs are affiliated with Area Agencies on Aging and funded with federal, as well as state and local dollars. There is no charge for services provided by the Ombudsman Program.

What Does the Long Term Care Ombudsman Do?

- ♦ Investigates and works to resolve problems or complaints affecting long term care residents.
- ♦ Identifies problem areas in long term care facilities and advocates or mediates for change.
- ♦ Provides information about long term care and related services.
- ♦ Promotes resident, family, and community involvement in long term care.
- ♦ Educates the community about the needs of long term care residents.
- ♦ Coordinates efforts with other agencies concerned with long term care.
- ♦ Visits long term care facilities to talk to residents and monitor conditions.
- ♦ Educates residents and facility staff about residents' rights and other issues.

What Types of Issues Does an Ombudsman Handle?

- ♦ Residents' Rights
- ♦ Quality of Care
- ♦ Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation
- ♦ Transfers and Discharges

Volunteer Friendly Visitor Program

Sixty percent of residents in long term care have no visitors. The Long Term Care Ombudsman Program sponsors Volunteer "Friendly Visitors" who go to facilities on a regular basis from two to four hours weekly, greet and visit residents and help educate residents and families on residents' rights. They ensure that residents' needs are communicated and that the lines of communication remain open.

Friendly Visitors diminish the sense of isolation experienced by residents, especially those without family. They provide encouragement and assist the resident in achieving a sense of self-determination. They are special people who make a significant difference in the residents' quality of life.